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The Mississippi River and Its Wonderful Valley. By Julius Chambers. 308 pages, maps and 80 illustrations. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1910. \$3.50.

So great is the interest in the possibilities of the Mississippi as a highway of commerce, so hopeful are the people that our facilities for transportation are not to be wasted and so eager is the desire for a sane solution of the problem of waterways, that this last book on the Mississippi will be, at first, somewhat of a disappointment, for it hardly rises to the present interest in the river. Less than a dozen pages on the present evolution of a great river system hardly warrants so inclusive a title as is given to this book. On the other hand, commercial possibilities and conservation of power may sometimes cause us to lose sight of the romance of earlier days. Many steps in the history of the river are narrated here and new light is given on some chapters of the story.

Back in the "era of fable" the account begins and the rumors and first indications of the river, as shown by European explorers, form the first chapter, a "conjectural period," of the history. Then follow accounts of the explorations of De Soto, Cartier, Allouez, La Salle, Joliet, Marquette, Hennepin, St. Cosme, Iberville and La Seuer. The discovery of the headwaters has considerable attention, and an account of a voyage in 1872 down the entire length of the river is interesting as a picture of the Mississippi, previous to any attempt to control it. The choice of material, however, is not always happy, as *e. g.*, when 50 per cent. of the account of the journey from St. Louis to New Orleans is filled with a second-hand gambling story. "The Mississippi in War" is the heading of a long chapter which treats of the struggles with the Indians, the defeat of the British at New Orleans in 1815 and the battles of the Civil War, especially those about Forts Henry and Donelson, Shiloh, New Orleans and Vicksburg. Many other affairs of the river are briefly mentioned, as the Louisiana Purchase, Lewis and Clark, Itasca State Park, the Delta and the "Mississippi Bubble." The volume closes with an historical account of the large cities along the river. The pictures are clear and well chosen; many of them are recent views and present what the text has somewhat neglected, the present aspect of the river.

R. M. B.

AFRICA

Die Pflanzenbarren der Afrikanischen Flüsse. (Münchener geographische Studien, No. 24). Von Dr. Oswald Deuerling. iii and 253 pp., 14 photo-engravings, 2 maps, bibliography and index. Theodor Ackermann, Munich, 1909. M. 5.

This is a very careful study of the blockading of river channels by vegetation, and especially in the Nile basin, where the sudd has frequently formed an impenetrable barrier to navigation until artificially removed. Due attention is given to these impediments in the rivers of the several continents, but the sudd of the Nile is most thoroughly discussed as to its manner of formation, the varieties of vegetation that enter into its composition, its distribution and the methods of removing it. The bibliography of the subject is remarkably full, embracing nearly 1,000 titles, and an appendix gives a list of the plants with descriptions of many of them. The monograph is the most comprehensive study of the whole subject that has yet been written and is a gratifying contribution to this phase of physical geography. The photo-engravings are illuminating. The black sketch maps (1:1,000,000 and 1:4,000,000) show the basins of the upper Nile and its tributaries in which the phenomenon is observed.